

Due May 1, 2008

**Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319**

***Request for Iowa Four-Year College/University
Performance Assessment System Funds***

College/University name: Clarke College

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Statement of Assurances

Should a Performance Assessment System Award be made to the applicant in support of the activities proposed in this application, the authorized signature on the cover page of this application certifies to the Iowa Department of Education that the authorized official will:

1. Upon request, provide the Iowa Department of Education with access to records and other sources of information that may be necessary to determine compliance with appropriate federal and state laws and regulations;
2. Use grant funds to supplement and not supplant funds from nonfederal sources.

Certification by Authorized or Institutional Official:

The applicant certifies that to the best of his/her knowledge the information in this application is correct, that the filing of this application is duly authorized by the governing body of this organization, or institution, and that the applicant will comply with the attached statement of assurances.

Joan Lingen, BVM, Ph.D.

Provost, VP for Academic Affairs

Typed or Printed Name of Authorized Official

Title

Signature of Authorized Official

Date

I. Context

Describe current program including number of teaching candidates graduated per year and number of full-time and part-time faculty teaching education courses. Indicate any unique features of the program that will help reviewers better understand your assessment needs. If you received a previous assessment system award, attach a copy of your final report or summarize results of your first year of work.

Clarke College is a Catholic, Liberal Arts College. In the 2007-2008 school year, we will graduate 43 teaching candidates and 14 Masters Degrees are awarded in a non-licensure MAE program. The Clarke education department consists of eight full time and two part time faculty members. The unique feature of the Clarke education program is our focus Professional Development Schools (PDS) models of integrating instruction and practical experience. Clarke uses four PDS centers, two in elementary education and one each in special education and secondary/middle school. In our PDS model, specific course are taught by Clarke faculty in an interdisciplinary manner with clinical experience located in local K-12 schools. Students practice teaching in a supervised setting as they learn about teaching.

Clarke faculty record assessment of students' progress through their educational career using an electronic portfolio. We are working to tie coursework and student teaching into the electronic assessment process. LiveText, a commercial portfolio system is used for portfolio assessment. Clarke faculty have been learning to use the LiveText system for student assessment. We have implemented e-portfolio assessment and are increasing our use of the LiveText system. Our knowledge and skill at using LiveText is increasing. With our increased knowledge and skills we are finding many areas that need improvement in the process of assessment, both in the use of e-portfolio and in our empirical assessment planning. We still struggle in linking student assessment to programmatic outcomes. As a result of the training and professional development afforded by the first two grant awards, we have a better understanding of how to work on improvements.

Clarke has received two one year awards for electronic assessment. The first year award was used to investigate and purchase the LiveText portfolio system. Once we implemented the system, we found two glaring inadequacies with the use of this electronic portfolio: Training in the use of the system, and; linking student assessment to program outcomes. The second award was used to address inadequate knowledge of using the e-portfolio in three main areas: First, to train faculty in using LiveText well, including assessing course work. Second, we invested in knowledge of assessment for new faculty. Faculty members were sent to a national assessment conference at Purdue University. Finally, we increased three faculty members' understanding of the capabilities of using LiveText by sending them to the LiveText conference in July.

As a result of the training and professional development allowed through these grants, we have identified areas we need to improve in our assessment of students and program.

Issue 1. Learning to use LiveText well requires a professional to provide training.

Bringing LiveText trainers to Clarke has allowed us to learn to assess student portfolios, to manage the portfolios within the LiveText system and to prepare simple reports. We have not learned to align course work into LiveText and thus incorporate student work into assessment for programmatic and course assessment. We have discussed this shortcoming with LiveText trainers and have devised a plan for training to incorporate coursework and to include information from outside agencies (such as cooperating and supervising teachers of clinical and student teaching experiences). Our goal, not yet realized, is to develop a clear picture of our candidates' growth and level of expertise in knowledge, skills and dispositions, all in an electronic format.

Issue 2. Understanding the interdisciplinary aspects of assessment is difficult.

Department faculty are more knowledgeable of assessment needs at the course and program levels. This growth has occurred in large part due to training and PD provided through TQE grants. The problem, like all learning, is that the more we learn, the more we know that we do not know. We have found that

linking our existing curriculum map to courses and assignments for student and program assessment to be extremely difficult. We plan to restructure our mapping of courses, and develop mapping of courses, assignments, outcomes and dispositions to accurately assess students and inform our program. We are a small department of 8 full time and two part time faculty. The benefit of this size is that we are all knowledgeable about our students, our outcomes and assignments. The problem is that we are all not as knowledgeable of electronic assessment as we would like, and working together on a common goal of developing a coherent assessment plan requires bringing all of us together for an extended period. To accomplish the goals of a coherent assessment plan, we plan to bring all faculty together for several days in a retreat setting in the summer to work on planning. We will map out a coherent plan for assessing students properly in an electronic format.

Issue 3. Clinical Professional Development Schools.

The distinctive feature of Clarke Colleges' Education Program is the Professional Development School (PDS). In our PDS model students and faculty conduct courses in a local K-12 school setting away from the college campus. Clinical courses and methods courses are combined in an interdisciplinary manner. Assessment plans described above will inform the value of course work. What is missing is assessment of the PDS model. Since our PDS courses are interdisciplinary, it is difficult to assess courses, and we do not assess the PDS experience holistically.

Nationally, a clear understanding of what constitutes a PDS has been under development for only about two years. Standards for quality in a PDS setting are in the planning stages. The National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) has existed for less than 10 years. The NAPDS is beginning a concerted effort to standardize around nine elements of a PDS. One of those elements is assessment of the PDS experience.

Clarke College faculty have been invited by the NAPDS executive board to be part of the development of the national PDS assessment standards and strategies. In August of 2008, NAPDS will begin work on these standards in a two days forum. The work will continue through meetings and research and national conferences. We plan to send two faculty members to the August meeting and the spring national conference to develop plans, implement and research the strategies and report on plans and research to the body of the NAPDS. This will allow us to develop, test and maintain strategies to assess the effectiveness of and make improvements to our PDS model.

II. Project Narrative *(1-2 pages describing how you will use the funds) A synopsis of the project narrative will be reflected in the Action Plan. Be sure that what you request in the new award is distinct from what was requested in any earlier TQE award. Your timeline for grant activity should not extend beyond December 15, 2009.*

Our plan is to address our shortcomings through training and professional development. We feel that the more we can learn about aligning electronic assessment, the better we will be able to sustain future assessment strategies.

1. Training for LiveText.

One of our faculty is learning to facilitate training, maintenance and changes in LiveText. This will allow us to maintain progress in adapting our electronic assessment tool to be as effective as possible after assessment grant money is no longer available. We will accomplish the goal of training our faculty facilitator through attendance at the LiveText conference (see #2 below) and through training on site.

Training on site will also benefit all faculty. We have completed specific training this year in LiveText, which has been very beneficial. Our faculty are not sufficiently trained in LiveText to efficiently manage all of the assessment functions we plan to accomplish. We plan to bring the LiveText trainer on site two times during the coming year. The focus of the training will be to align course assignments within LiveText and assessments clearly and to include assessments from clinical and student teaching experiences.

2. Livetext conference in July

LiveText as an assessment tool is very powerful. Using it to the greatest advantage is not easy. The LiveText conference in July is an excellent forum to not only learn about LiveText from corporate trainers, but from people using LiveText in the field. We plan to send three of our faculty to the next LiveText conference in July, 2009. Three of our faculty members will attend this conference in July 2008. In 2009, the one faculty member who serves as our facilitator (Ellen Spencer) will attend again. The other two faculty members will be other than those attending in July 2008.

3. Faculty retreat to work on mapping courses, assignments and assessments

As we have learned more about assessment, we have come to know that our greatest challenge is aligning coursework, outcomes and assessment into a coherent plan. We have a curriculum map of courses and outcomes, but it is in need of improvement. We do not have an assessment curriculum map that properly aligns our standards with our course outcomes and our assessment reporting. Planning to develop alignment of this magnitude cannot be accomplished in department meetings on campus during the school year. We need time and a location that will allow us to develop understanding of needs, and then develop a consensus in how to align outcomes, course assignment and assessment.

To accomplish this, during the summer we plan to take all 10 faculty members to an off campus location in the immediate area where we can focus on work in an uninterrupted manner. We will meet one day on campus to gather materials and plan how to structure courses aligned with our curriculum map. The remaining work will be accomplished at a facility off campus over two days. We will work on developing assessment outcomes within LiveText, aligning them with course outcomes and assignments and assuring all standards are assessed at proper intervals in the students' educational career.

4. Assessing PDS

As described above, Clarke College makes great use of the Professional Development School model. We believe this method of integrating instruction and clinical experiences in a K-12 environment is beneficial to our students. Although we are assessing courses within the PDS, we do not have clear evidence to support the benefit of the PDS experience. We feel that our program should be assessing the PDS experience. Currently we do not know how to assess PDS well, in fact, no one involved in PDS knows. The National Association for Professional Development Schools is the national organization serving as the authority for PDS. Within the last year, the NAPDS developed and is piloting nine standards for PDS.

As a next step, the NAPDS is forming a forum to develop standards and strategies around the nine standards. One strand of these strategies is assessment. Clarke College has several faculty members who are active in the national organization. Two faculty members have been invited to the NAPDS forum in August. At this forum, the faculty members will take part in developing assessment standards and strategies. We will bring these strategies back to Clarke College and implement them within our PDS model using the LiveText system. The two faculty members will then provide a report on initial assessment at the NAPDS national conference in spring, 2009.

III. Action Plan –

Goal	Objectives	Action Steps	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Budget Request
Goal 1: Increase faculty knowledge of the use of LiveText tools in assessing student work in courses, aligned with program outcomes.	Department faculty will use LiveText in courses, aligning course outcomes with program outcomes, assessing all standards clearly and effectively over the course of the students' career.	LiveText training for faculty in developing assessments within the courses and examining data through LiveText to properly inform the program.	Lawrence Bice and Ellen Spencer	Two training sessions, both in fall, 2008	\$3800 (2 sessions at \$1900 per)
Goal 2: Deeper understanding of LiveText tools for aligning student, program and institutional assessments	Department and major faculty apply assessment alignment to LiveText, adjusting LiveText use as needed	Three faculty attend the LiveText Collaboration Conference, July, 2009	Lawrence Bice	Conferences dates TBD; 2008 dates are July 24 through 27.	\$5100 (3 people @ \$1700)
Goal 3: Faculty will be proficient in aligning curriculum, outcomes, assessments of student work and program needs.	1. Train faculty in alignment of assessment elements. 2. Faculty as a group will update current curriculum maps. Develop assessment maps and align all with teaching standards with LiveText format.	1. One day workshop on campus to learn about alignment and plan. 2. Two day workshop off site to develop maps and assessment strategies	Lawrence Bice, Lynn Lester (College Director of Assessment)	July, 2008, three days.	\$4250 (\$125 stipend per day per faculty member for three days, (\$3750), \$250 per day for facility rental and catering for two days (\$500))
Goal 4: Develop and sustain an assessment strategy for PDS experience.	Two faculty members will be involved in the development of national standards for PDS assessment. Strategies developed around standards will be applied and tested at Clarke and reported to the NAPDS national conference.	1. Two faculty members attend NAPDS forum in New Orleans in August, 2008. 2. Faculty conduct assessment during fall, 2008 and spring 2009. 3. Faculty members present at NAPDS national conference in April, 2009.	Lawrence Bice Michele Vosberg	Forum, August 3 and 4, 2008. NAPDS conference, March 12-15, 2009.	Total \$6300 Forum \$2600 ((\$1300 per person: (\$250 registration, \$500 travel, \$450 hotel, \$100 per diem)) Conference \$3700 ((\$1815 per person: (\$375 registration, \$535 travel, \$700 hotel, \$240 per diem))
Total					\$19450

IV. Sustainability Plan. *Write a clear succinct plan (1 to 3 pages max) for how the work will continue to fully meet the requirements of Chapter 79 for assessment systems. Describe how your institution plans to sustain the performance assessment system when TQE grant support is no longer available. Some considerations you may want to address include plans to finance sustainability and the capacity you have to sustain the work you have completed.*

Clarke College is fortunate to have a stable, yet small faculty in the education department. Projections are for little turnover in the next several years. The focus of this grant request is for professional development in assessment for this stable faculty. As we have learned more about assessment over the past several years, we have increased the complexity of our knowledge, learning that we need to know more. If we can come away from these grants with greater knowledge, this knowledge will sustain our assessment strategies in the future.

Knowledge is not a means to an end, it opens doors to increased learning. Our LiveText training thus far has provided us with increasing knowledge and understanding. We have not achieved the level of understanding we need to sustain our electronic assessment at a level that informs student growth, course assessment and program assessment. We feel we are close, however. As we have developed our training program, we have made each training session specific to our changing needs. We are close to understanding LiveText at a level that allows us to sustain our assessment strategies. We have identified areas in which we need more training from LiveText professionals. We feel that if we obtain this training in the next year, we will reach the level of maturity in our understanding that will make us able to sustain and grow our program on our own.

As we better understand how LiveText works, we will be better able to figure out how to use expanded capabilities. Our goal with this year's training is to bring us to a level of proficiency that will allow us to be lifelong learners in the electronic assessment system, rather than simply filling in a template. As we continue to grow in our understanding of LiveText, we may need additional training. We will use College professional development funding to accomplish this after the grant is ended.

The assessment of PDS will be an ongoing project. Since Clarke College has very strong experience with PDS, we should be on the ground floor of developing assessment strategies. In fact, the NAPDS executive committee has requested our involvement in the upcoming forum. Once assessment plans are developed and put in place, assessment of PDS will be an ongoing project, sustained as a part of our assessment plan.

We feel we are in a strong position for sustainability as a result of TQE grants. We have identified a faculty member that will oversee LiveText issues. We have provided her training focused on her leadership for the department. We have concentrated on training faculty in the development of assessment plans and the use of LiveText in those plans.

One faculty member in the education department serves half time in the department and half time as director of assessment for the College. She has been a part of all of our professional development and training throughout this process. Her knowledge and experience will also help us sustain and grow our assessment plans. Training produces knowledge, which will sustain and grow as we move into the future of our assessment plans

V. Budget Requests

Personnel		
Wages Goal 3: Faculty stipends	\$3750 (goal 3)	\$3750
Expenses (Travel, Meals, Lodging) Goal 3: Facility rental	\$500 (goal 3)	\$500
Professional Services/Professional Development		
Fees Goal 1: Two LiveText training sessions at @\$1900 Goal 2: Registration for LiveText Conference and preconference sessions (2 @ \$585) Goal 4: Registration for forum (2@\$250) and conference (2@375)	\$3800 goal 1 \$1170 goal 2 \$1250 goal 4	\$6220
Expenses (Mileage, Meals, Lodging, Room Rental) Goal 2 expenses to attend LiveText conference (3 @ 1310 Goal 4 expenses for forum (2 @1050) and conference (2@1475)	\$3930 goal 2 \$5050 goal 4	\$8980
Software		
Hardware		
Supplies and Materials		
Phone/Mail		
Other – specify:		
Other – specify:		
Total		\$19450

VI. Budget Narrative: *Note that the objective of the grant is to bring all programs up to standard over the life of the grant. Funding this year will be made up to \$20,000. To receive the maximum award, your proposal should demonstrate either great need or great complexity/size of program as well as prudent use of any previous awards and a clear plan for sustainability.*

The budget for this grant request is for training and professional development. Our plan is to learn specifically how to better conduct assessment for our program using LiveText software.

Goal 1: LiveText Training. \$3800 total for this goal

\$3800 is proposed for LiveText training. Training will be conducted on two separate days at a cost of \$1900 per day. The training will take place on the Clarke campus and will be tailored specifically to Clarke needs described in this narrative. All costs for training are included in the \$1900 rate.

Goal 2. Faculty professional development for LiveText. \$5100 for this goal.

LiveText conference. One Clarke faculty member attended the 2007 LiveText conference. She reported that it was exceptionally beneficial. We will send our LiveText coordinator and two other faculty members who have not attended this conference before. The cost of registration is \$435, with \$150 additional for a pre-conference workshop. The conference hotel is approximately \$200 per night, with each attendee staying four nights. The remainder of the budget is for travel, parking and meals.

Goal 3: Alignment of assessments and curriculum. \$4250 for this goal.

We will bring faculty on campus for one day and will then work in a local off campus location for two additional days. All faculty members will not be on contract at the time of training. Each of 10 faculty members will be provided a daily stipend of \$125. Ten faculty at \$125 per day for three days comes to \$3750. The cost for rental and food for two days at an offsite location is \$500.

Goal 4: Assessment of PDS. \$6300 for this goal.

This budget item is strictly for professional development for assessment of Clarke programs. Two Clarke faculty have been invited to participate in the NAPDS forum on PDS standards in August, 2008. The faculty members will serve on the committee that concentrates on assessment. The same two faculty members will conduct assessments and return to the spring NAPDS conference to report and share with committee members and others on assessment practices.

The cost for the two day forum in New Orleans (\$2600) includes \$500 for registration (\$250 per person). The rest of the cost (\$2100) is hotel, travel and per diem (\$1050 per person). The cost for the four day spring conference (\$3700) includes \$750 for registration (\$375 per person). The rest of the cost (\$2950) is hotel, travel and per diem (\$1475 per person).